

Report of the Ocean Resources Management Plan Working Group

August 17, 2005

The MACZAC ORMP working group decided to address the following issues. Several of these have been discussed at MACZAC meetings or addressed in MACZAC working groups. For each issue, we have written a one to two-page position paper, stating the issue or problem and proposing recommendations as follows: (1) change in the law; (2) change in administrative rules; and/or (3) change in policy. These papers focus on process rather than projects. We have adopted the broad categories proposed by the Hawaii Ocean & Coastal Council (HOCC).

1. **Resource Protection - Enforcement.** To be effective, enforcement needs to be community based similar to the neighborhood watch programs conducted by the police departments and the Makai Watch program initiated by DLNR. The idea is for the resource enforcement agency to have a mentoring program so that community members know and trust them and are willing to work with them. The emphasis should shift from policing only to community involvement and education. We are proposing a restructuring and consolidation of DLNR agencies currently engaged in resource enforcement in the coastal zone.
2. **Coastal Development and Activities - Public Shoreline Access.** We noted the "stealth construction" of guard rails and other impediments to parking for shoreline recreation users. A MACZAC working group prepared GIS maps identifying surf site parking areas and distributed these maps to DOT, DTS, DLNR, etc. It didn't help; guardrails were recently constructed on Kalanianaʻole Highway near Makai Range, a parking area identified by the MACZAC working group. As we learned with the Diamond Head bikeway project, many of these projects fall through the cracks in terms of agency and public review. To deal with this disconnect, we have recommend a public notification process for agencies proposing projects that impact shoreline access/parking.
3. **Balance of Resource Uses and Resource Protection – Support of a Sustainable Ocean Tourism Industry.** Hawaii has a very limited number of good snorkel/dive destinations with good coral reef habitat and safe anchorages for vessels. To foster a sustainable ocean tourism industry, the state needs to manage and protect marine ecosystems and support the mainly small, locally-owned, family businesses in the industry. Recommendations include more day use moorings, marine reserves, and artificial reefs, as well as assurance of a fair business and regulatory environment and adequate harbor infrastructure.
4. **Resource Protection – Streamlined Permitting.** We noted the need for an expedited approval process for certain beneficial activities such as mooring pin installations for day use moorings to prevent anchor damage to coral, mangrove and other invasive species removal, and Hawaiian fishpond repair and restoration. Also recommended is a streamlined process for minor uses and activities in the Conservation District.

5. Coastal Development and Activities - Small Boat Harbor Issues. DLNR has not done a good job in managing the small boat harbors. There appears to be a lack of accountability. Facilities are in disrepair, wastewater disposal is a problem, and as we learned at our MACZAC meeting on Lanai, there's a disconnect between the users and the department during the planning and design of projects.
6. Resource Protection – Management of Unencumbered State Lands. An example of this was the issue of cultural resources on UH land on the island of Hawaii, raised at a MACZAC meeting in Hilo. UH lacks the organizational capacity and the Historic Preservation Division lacks the resources to manage these burials. Kaena Point was once in this situation, with trash and damage to the dune ecosystem by offroaders, before its designation as a Natural Area Reserve. Given the low likelihood of adequate funding for management of these lands is low, we are proposing partnerships with community groups and nonprofit resource organizations.
7. Resource Protection - Inadequate Wastewater Treatment in Coastal Areas. MACZAC discussed this issue and learned that this is a problem statewide, adversely affecting near shore water quality. We are recommending a process for identifying priority areas that need wastewater treatment upgrades, considering proximity to beach parks and impaired waters, as well as practicality. Upgrades should not be limited to large wastewater treatment plants; smaller system should be considered as well.
8. Resource Protection – Marine Reserves. For an island state, Hawaii has very few no-take marine reserves/marine protected areas. For example, there are only nine Marine Life Conservation Districts (MCLDs). The benefits of such reserves are evident. An assessment conducted in 2000 revealed that average reef fish biomass was 260 percent higher in the Northwest Hawaiian Islands National Wildlife Refuge than in the main Hawaiian Islands. Furthermore, a much higher level of apex predators was found in the NWHI compared to the main islands, where the bulk of fish biomass consists of herbivores and small, low-level carnivores. The primary opposition to designating more marine reserves comes from the fishing community. Recommendations are made to overcome this opposition to facilitate designation of additional marine reserves.
9. Coastal Development – Commercial Harbors. DOT Harbors should update the 2020 harbor plans by engaging users and factoring in new security requirements and the pressures of the state's growth on the maritime industry. Infrastructure and enforcement improvements are critical needs. Those areas where commercial and recreational harbor uses intersect must be addressed. The update will require collaboration between DOT Harbors, DLNR-DOBOR, U.S. Coast Guard, and users.